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MEASURES FOR IMPROVING WORK  
OF SOVIET STATE CONTROL AGENCIES

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The founder of the Soviet state, the great Lenin, and the Communist Party he created have at every stage of socialist construction attached exceptional significance to constant improvement and strengthening of the state apparatus.

Questions of operation of the state apparatus in new circumstances, when the Soviet people are realizing a majestic program of Communist construction and are directing their energies toward translating into reality the tasks of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, were given a great deal of attention by the 20th Congress of the CPSU. And this is understandable, for "without a well-coordinated, well-organized, efficiently operating state apparatus that is near to the people, no sector of socialist construction can be administered," N. S. Khrushchev pointed out in the Central Committee CPSU report to the 20th Party Congress. The congress emphasized anew the necessity for profound study and consistent realization of Leninist teachings on principles of structuring and organizing the activities of the state apparatus that have been forgotten by some officials, at times by those occupying high positions.

The Central Committee CPSU and the Soviet government in recent years have evolved and implemented a whole series of measures aimed at improving the work of the state apparatus, and have persistently struggled to reinstate and fully realize V. I. Lenin's positions on the organization of administration in a socialist state.

V. I. Lenin taught that the basis of the work of all elements of the state apparatus, from top to bottom, must be concern for the people's welfare, guidance of the Communist Party, democratic centralism, close and constant linkage with the toiling masses, active participation of the masses themselves in state administration, active organizational and administration, active organizational and educational work among the masses, and strict and undeviating observance of socialist legality.

Heading the Soviet government in the first years of Soviet power, V. I. Lenin worked tirelessly to make the new state apparatus equal to the great tasks of socialist reconstruction and showed himself a matchless example of unvarying concern for the efficient and uninterrupted operation of central and local state agencies.

In the treasure house of Leninist work dedicated to the organization of the state apparatus, note should be made of the articles "How We Should Reorganize Worker-Peasant Inspection (RKI)" and "Better Fewer, But Better," in which V. I. Lenin devoted great attention to the RKI (later the People's Commissariat of Worker-Peasant Inspection), the heir to the best traditions of which should now be the Ministry of State Control.

As is known, on Lenin's motion the 12th Party Congress reorganized the RKI, having pointed out that the RKI "must at the same time be above reproach, with respect to its own structure (in the sense of organization of work), and absolutely authoritative vis-a-vis the other people's commissariats, as an agency actually knowing how to place and capable of placing improvement of the state apparatus on a scientific plane..."

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The RKI justified V. I. Lenin's hopes, and its work repeatedly merited the approval of party congresses and conferences. Thus, for example, the 15th Congress of the VKP(b) noted that during the period reported on [1925-1927] "The Central Control Commission (TsKK) and Worker-Peasant Inspection (RKI) stimulated the attention of the entire party and conducted an energetic struggle against bureaucracy and for improving the state apparatus and making it less expensive, enlisting in this endeavor the broad worker and peasant masses," and pointed to the achievement of "initial successes in the field of combating bureaucratic distortions and in connection with improving the state machinery," especially emphasizing in this connection the significance of the success and work experience of the RKI for further development of struggle along that line.

RKI agencies attained widespread and fully merited popularity among the people, being in the fullest sense of the word cruel to bureaucrats and red-tapists.

Throughout the period of its existence, the RKI carried on the work of curtailing hundreds of central and local industrial, retail, transport, etc. institutions, saving the Soviet state hundreds of millions of rubles. Thus, the combined Plenum of the Central Committee and TsKK VKP(b) of 29 July-9 August 1927 noted that the RKI's work had effected curtailment of Soviet institutions by 20, 30, and 40 percent, with simultaneous curtailment of bookkeeping by 50 to 70 percent. In the same resolution the party assigned the RKI a new task, that of working together with governmental departments to secure, "while making the apparatus less costly, increased work efficiency, diminution of red tape, and rapprochement between the apparatus and the people."

At present, state control agencies do not give enough attention to improving the work of the state apparatus. The Ministry of State Control inadequately realizes Leninist instructions on state control, and does not raise major questions with respect to improving the state apparatus. State Control agencies must revert to the work that the RVT successfully performed in studying and generalizing experience in the task of improving (rationalizing) the Soviet state administrative apparatus, especially the apparatuses of ministries and their local agencies.

N. S. Khrushchev declared at the 20th Congress CPSU: "It is essential fundamentally to reorganize the work of the Ministry of State Control USSR in order that it will profoundly study operating problems of the state machinery and its structure, check on how one or another link in the state apparatus is executing party and governmental decisions, and submit to the government major questions of principle with regard to improving and rationalizing the work of state administration."

The instructions of the 20th Party Congress on improving state control work with regard to perfecting the state machinery must be carried out as quickly as possible. In achieving improvement of the state apparatus, state control agencies must not, it goes without saying, duplicate the functions of the Ministry of Finance USSR, which is responsible for combating personnel and other superfluous in the state apparatus.

Financial agencies have already done a considerable amount of work to review the structures and tables of organization of sales organizations in industrial ministries and departmental supply organizations. They also did analogous work in the field of putting in good order networks of timber procurement enterprises and organizations, in curtailing the procurement apparatuses of ministries and departments, in studying the network of motor transport organizations, in clarifying the possibility of more rationally utilizing motor transport by means of organizing centralized carriage of mass cargoes, in lowering overhead costs, and in curtailing the administrative apparatus of the construction industry by consolidating small construction organizations.

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However, the efforts of the Ministry of Finance in the work of organizing the struggle to improve the apparatus are inadequate. The Ministry of Finance has not set an example in striving to achieve an economical apparatus, having retained in its central machinery and in local financial agencies many superfluous links, and it has not been able to organize control-inspection work in this connection at the proper level.

Aside from this, institutions necessary to the national economy are frequently curtailed at the suggestion of financial agencies solely because their operations suffered from serious defects. Rather than profoundly analyzing and recommending measures to eliminate them, financial agencies have proposed that the ministries concerned liquidate these institutions, and such liquidation has often been effected under the guise of improving the structure and simplifying and reducing the cost of an apparatus.

Having done the work of checking on execution of party and governmental decisions on reorganizing the apparatus, the Ministry of Finance does not effectively systematize the data gathered, which require scientific generalization with the participation of specialists. The results of these checks are discussed by the financial apparatus, but they are not always made widely known in the ministries that have been investigated.

The indicated defects in the work of the Ministry of Finance greatly reduce its role in the business of generalizing and disseminating the results of experience and in improving the state apparatus. Ministries of state control and finance must closely collaborate with each other in the tasks of perfecting the state apparatus and striving to reduce costs. The usefulness of such collaboration is confirmed by practice. For example, the Ministry of State Control and the Ministry of Finance of the Ukrainian SSR worked together in studying the structure and tables of organization of the administrative and managerial apparatus of a series of ministries and departments. They forwarded their proposals on possible curtailment of personnel allowances and liquidation of duplicating organizations to leading agencies for consideration.

However, it is necessary precisely to delimit the competence of both ministries in the given field of activity. In this connection there arises, in particular, the question as to who shall have jurisdiction over the work of evolving model organizational charts and tables of organization. By the end of 1954, several hundred thousand organizations employing approximately 7 million persons have already adopted model tables of organization. For 374 kinds of institutions, enterprises, and organizations 183 model tables of organization were in effect, including those for health institutions, general education schools, public libraries, kindergartens, children's homes, communal feeding establishments, teahouses, lunchrooms, etc. Model tables of organization were adopted by 9,000 MFS. However, some currently effective model tables of organization approved in the period 1946-1953 are outdated and require prompt review, taking into account new tasks.

Approval of model organizational charts and tables of organization, which is possible, of course, only for institutions of the mass type, is currently effected under the direction and control of the Ministry of Finance USSR or, more exactly, is coordinated by that ministry. With regard to the Ministry of State Control USSR of the functions of scientific generalization of experience and coordination of departmental operations in the field of improving the apparatus, questions of coordination in the work of establishing model organization charts and tables of organization must naturally be transferred to the jurisdiction of state control agencies. However, checking on compliance with model organization charts and tables of organization should, in our opinion, remain wholly a function of financial agencies.

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Agencies of the Ministry of State Control already actually check organization charts and staffs of various ministries, studying on the spot the work of enterprises and institutions subordinate to them.

An example is the check on execution of party and governmental instructions aimed at improving the work of the state apparatus of the Ministry of Social Security of the same republic, conducted by comptrollers of the Ministry of State Control Turkmen SSR. Since this was the first such check, all of the comptrollers of the group for the ministries of health and social security of the republic participated in drawing up the checking program. The program was broadly discussed at an intergroup conference of comptrollers.

The ministry's work during a 9 month period was checked. Comptrollers analyzed the nature of papers received by the ministry, familiarized themselves with the contents of incoming and outgoing correspondence, checked on the time it took them to be circulated, and ascertained the correctness of replies sent. They also studied ministerial collegium material, the minister's orders, and reports of officials in the apparatus on the results of checks made by them on peripheral agencies. All this permitted the exposure of substantial defects in the work of the ministerial apparatus. Materials produced by the check were discussed in an open party meeting participated in by officials of peripheral agencies and in a meeting of the Collegium of the Ministry of Social Security of the republic.

The check produced substantial benefits. For example, in the course of checking it was ascertained that the bulk of complaints and petitions sent to the ministry were in connection with the fact that oblast, city, and rayon social security sections did not independently decide many questions relative to pensions. On the basis of the proposals of state control agencies, as of now certain functions formerly discharged by the ministry have been transferred to its oblast sections. Other functions formerly discharged by the ministerial apparatus on a centralized basis have also been transferred to subordinate agencies.

While the checking activities of financial agencies fundamentally develop in the budgetary and tax fields, in accounting, and in the collection of state income, even in the sphere of table-of-organization work such activities have a definitely financial aspect that does not permit probing deeply into the details of questions relative to improving the state apparatus; for the Ministry of State Control this work is a historically created field of activity that has been justified by the basic directions and objectives of its work.

It is now also possible for state control agencies to extend this work widely; with the creation of state committees of the Council of Ministers USSR on labor and wages, on the introduction of new technical developments, and on construction affairs, the amount of control work previously performed by the Ministry of State Control in the indicated fields has substantially declined.

[Comment: These committees are the State Committee for Construction Affairs of the Council of Ministers USSR, established 9 May 1950 (Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSR, 29 June 1950); the State Committee on Questions of Labor and Wages of the Council of Ministers USSR, established 24 May 1955; and the State Committee for the Introduction of New Technical Developments of the Council of Ministers USSR, established 20 May 1955 (Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSR, 14 January 1955).]

In organizing the work of checking on execution of party and governmental directives relative to improving the state apparatus, the Ministry of State Control in no case should establish a special apparatus for that purpose. This apparatus already exists in the form of groups headed by chief comptrollers for particular ministries, which also take part in the indicated work, it being an integral element of their immediate responsibilities.

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Changing conditions and the improving level of direction of economic and cultural construction in Soviet departments make it necessary for state control agencies to employ methods of struggle against superfluousities (for example, in record-keeping) different from those applied in their time by RKI agencies. There must be taken into account the important role, first of all, of intradepartmental control, which exists in every ministry, the functions of which must be broadened.

However, at present, the activities of intradepartmental control agencies are uncoordinated with respect to methods. Such coordination, preserving subordination of intradepartmental control directly to the minister of each USSR ministry, can and should be the responsibility of the Ministry of State Control USSR, and in union and autonomous republics, that of union-republic ministries of state control. There may be various forms of linkage between the Ministry of State Control and intradepartmental control. Intervention on the part of state control agencies in the work of intradepartmental control would, were the situation otherwise, play a most useful role, but, unfortunately, their interrelationships are not adjusted.

To coordinate work done in the intradepartmental control area with the Ministry of Finance and certain other agencies having state wide jurisdiction (obshchegosudarstvennyy organ), it would be expedient to have in the Ministry of State Control USSR a coordinating council, and for the purpose of rendering consultative aid to ministries in regard to improving the apparatus, a special scientific institute. (Author's note: In the RKI period there existed an Institute of Administrative Technique. In speaking of establishing a scientific institute in the system of the Ministry of State Control, in which would be concentrated the work of scientific generalization of the results of checks upon the state apparatus, and first and foremost, ministries and departments, it goes without saying that we do not have in view simply re-establishing the former institute. The abolition of that institute was provoked by its isolation from the general problems of the Soviet state apparatus, by its substitution for the problem of cadres and their training and education that of the mechanization of work, by the apolitical nature of its work, and by the political harmfulness of its employees' conclusions and "instructions.") This institute must solve problems with respect to practical methods of state administration, particularly problems relative to correspondence and rationalization of office work, the problem of introducing technical devices facilitating this work that have long ago been employed abroad, and scientific methods of stenography, typing, etc.

The 15th Party Congress [1927] emphasized in its decisions on the work of the TsKK-RKI that "the creation of an inexpensive and efficient [state and economic] apparatus alone will not suffice us," that "the technique of administration must be so structured that improvement of this technique will facilitate resolution of the basic tasks of socialist construction with which we are faced..." and that "improvement of the technique of administration is not only a means for lowering the cost of the administrative machinery but also a method of simplifying administrative work, which cannot but facilitate enlistment of new strata of the millioned masses in the business of administering the country."

The importance of a scientific approach to the solution of state administrative problems was emphasized by V. I. Lenin, who pointed out that officials of the reorganized RKI must be tested on knowledge of our state apparatus, on knowledge of fundamental theory regarding the state apparatus, and on the principles of the science of administration, correspondence, etc.

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The scientific organizational and research center for questions of improving the state apparatus (ministries and departments and their local agencies) must be the Ministry of State Control, which is the immediate heir of the Leninist RKI. It is necessary to establish a special scientific institute in this ministry to do exactly such work.

The Ministry of State Control USSR will be called upon to coordinate the work of this institute with research work already being carried on by certain departmental branch institutes on problems of economy and organization of corresponding branches of the national economy.

Every kind of development of Soviet democracy and widespread mass participation ensure success in any branch of state activity. Without depending on the creative activity and initiative of the working people, questions of perfecting the state apparatus cannot be resolved.

The entire construction of the Leninist plan for reorganizing the TsKK and the RKI necessitated enlisting the broad masses of workers and peasants in the work of improving the state apparatus. The title of the new People's Commissariat of Worker-Peasant Inspection (NK RKI) indicated its close linkage with the workers and peasants.

Without enlisting the masses in investigations of the apparatus' work, it would be impossible to conduct them on such a large scale as the RKI did. For example, in 1927 and 1928, 1,752 persons participated in checks carried out directly by the central apparatus of NK RKI USSR, and in 1928 and 1929, 4,790 persons participated, not counting activists of the NK RKI's Complaints Bureau and many thousands of persons who participated in purging the state apparatus. In 1928, okrug RKIs in the Ukraine enlisted approximately 70,000 persons in the investigations carried out by them and by complaints bureaus. As a result of RKI work carried on in connection with purging the apparatus of the Moscow Financial Division, in which worker brigades participated, the size of this apparatus was reduced by almost half without damaging its effectiveness, and its structure was substantially simplified.

It is completely obvious that the RKI's enormous experience in enlisting the masses in the work of improving the apparatus can and should be broadly utilized in the practice of the Ministry of State Control USSR and its local agencies.

The current reconstruction of various links of the Soviet state administrative apparatus owes its success in no small degree to the active participation of the toiling masses. Workers and engineering and technical personnel of enterprises, toilers in socialist agriculture, and representatives of various strata of the Soviet intelligentsia, speaking in sessions of soviets and in meetings and production conferences, as well as in the pages of the press, introduce many valuable proposals for improving the Soviet state apparatus. A large number of proposals are introduced by the working people on questions of improving the structure and curtailing the staffs of central apparatuses of various ministries and their local agencies. A great number of critical comments are made concerning defects in the style of work of particular departmental agencies and officials.

Careful study of these proposals and maximum use of them are the duties of every ministry to whose operations they relate, as well as that of the Ministry of State Control, which is called upon to generalize the experience of various ministries.

The creative initiative of the working people in finding the way to reconstruct the apparatus and economize state means is inexhaustible. For example, Comrade Blazhko, secretary of the editorial board of the Frunzovskiy Rayon newspaper, Odesskaya Oblast, raises the question of curtailing swollen rayon procurement organizations, pointing out that a substantial part of the

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employees of these institutions are not overburdened with work. Furthermore, the work of certain of these organizations is of a seasonal character. M. Sitnikov, section inspector of the Central Statistical Administration under the Council of Ministers USSR in Sunzhenskiy Rayon, Groznenskaya Oblast, proposes the unification of rayon planning and statistical agencies, which would ensure, aside from economy and the reduction of staffs, unity in planning and statistical reporting. A. Orlov, head of the Pokhvistnevskiy Rayon Health Section, Kuybyshevskaya Oblast, and R. Kollo, chief physician of the sanitary-epidemiological station of the same rayon, consider it expedient to subordinate all health institutions to one department, the Ministry of Health. R. Alatorstev, chief engineer of the Bashkir Administration of the Ministry of Communications RSFSR, proposes to transfer all departmental interurban telephone and telegraph circuits (except those of the Ministry of Railways) and city telephone exchanges to the Ministry of Communications USSR.

Viewing from below how one apparatus or another is reorganized, how directives on bringing an apparatus nearer to enterprises and institutions are being implemented, the toiling masses protest against unjustified, hasty reconstruction of apparatuses, insist upon merging institutions discharging the same function in the same location that are subordinate to different institutions and work apart, and point to the fruitless expenditure of state funds by certain scientific institutes that labor over subjects detached from reality, etc.

Meanwhile, the agencies responsible for checking on the operation of ministries do not always listen to signals originating from below. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of State Control USSR in recent years have depended too little on mass activity in carrying out various checks and investigations regarding the structure and functions of apparatuses of particular departments. In practice, until recently, state control agencies did not devote due attention to this matter, as is evidenced by the following incident: An order issued by the Minister of State Control USSR directed a series of union-republic ministries of state control to check on organization of the work of reviewing toilers' complaints and petitions in 11 oblast executive committees. The order stated that, by agreement with agencies of soviets, the working people's participation in the check-up be enlisted. Despite this instruction, the services of activists were in no case enlisted in the check-up, except in Ternopol'skaya Oblast.

There must be an end to the practice of underrating the role of the masses in improving the state apparatus, contradicting Leninist instructions and clearly ignoring the historical experience of the NKI, which was an agency of great authority in the eyes of the people precisely because of its nearness to the masses.

The directives of the 20th Party Congress on the Sixth Five-Year Plan for developing the USSR national economy in the period 1956-1960 point out the necessity "to continue the work of further improving, curtailing, and cutting down the cost of the administrative (managerial) apparatus, of liquidating paralleling and superfluous links of the apparatus, and of eliminating excessive personnel.

This involves the task of raising to a high level the work of improving the state apparatus, of utilizing the rich experience of socialist state control agencies, of fully coordinating departmental operations to that end, and, finally, of placing on a scientific basis study of the methods of branch state administration.

Soviet state agencies will successfully cope with that task only if they will depend on the patriotic initiative and versatile production experience of workers, kolkhozniks, and specialists in industry and in other branches of the economy, and on the experience of the masses.

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